

**West Hartford Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC)
Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2015**

Attendees: Amal Ali, Jeff Bersin, Jackson Fowler, Dan Jordan, Joe Kalache, Rebecca Lemanski, Zacharie Meya, Troy Moore, Leo Negron, Jolynn Rismay, Ahmed Shahbaz, Zainab Shahbaz, Marisa Tamayo, Pat Tyler, Peg Weeks

Welcome / Introductions / Approve Minutes / Early Departures / Announcements

Jeff Bersin welcomed members and introductions were made. Meeting minutes from the February meeting were approved. Jeff Bersin shared information about the Good Samaritan Law as well as the use of Narcan. There was also discussion about the drop box for prescription medications and the issue of where it might be located. The contents can be disposed of as abandoned property which is less expensive. Jeff announced an upcoming workshop entitled “Risky Business: Parenting Teenagers” which will be held on March 31st from 7-8 PM. Marisa Tamayo and Troy Moore agreed to distribute the flyer to Bristow and King Philip principals for distribution to parents.

Impact of Addiction on Brain Pathway Formation – John Mancini, LPC, The Essential Path Family Institute

John Mancini discussed the impact of substances and the media on the young brain and how the brain can develop pathways towards addiction. John shared that dopamine is at an all-time high during the teen years and if teens are overexposed to media, the dendrites can become desensitized. John referred to the term “internet accountability” and the importance of parents monitoring and limiting their children’s access as well as using parental controls. He shared that over exposure to media can have a negative impact on future relationships because it can result in false expectations and need for constant stimulation.

John shared the following statistics:

- Only 1/3 of parents set up parental controls and monitor what their children do online
- 41% of teens agree that their parents have no idea what they are doing online.
- 67% of kids admit to clearing their browser history to hide internet use from their parents.
- 73% of kids are exposed to pornography before age 18

Current Collaboration with Institute for Community Research / Proposed Plan for Future Sustainability

Jeff Bersin shared that ICR has worked with the SAPC for the past five years and that it’s time to transition their work to the SAPC. ICR’s role would shift to a more advisory one over time. As part of his presentation, Dan Jordan distributed two attachments – one entitled the “Current SAPC/ICR Partnership” and the other entitled “Sustainability and Priorities for the SAPC and ICR Partnership.” The current Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services five year collaborative grant with ICR and SAPC ends on June 30. The next five year grant proposal is due April 20th. The new grant is different from the previous one which was more program-based and was measured by the

school drug and alcohol surveys. For the current grant, all goals were met except the area of “perception of harm,” which could be a future area of focus.

The new grant focus could be sustainability and building capacity to maintain programs long-term. Dan discussed three possible areas of transition:

1. **Drug and Alcohol Surveys** – schools would start doing data analysis of the surveys and SAPC would give input on survey questions. There was discussion regarding whether or not we would continue tweaking current surveys or try something new. The issue with trying something new is that trend data would be lost. Joe Kalache shared that the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving may be funding a new survey. Jeff Bersin said they may be only funding one town.
2. **Lead by Example** - ICR would identify school staff to run the Lead by Example program in the schools, with oversight from the SAPC. Marisa Tamayo shared that it’s been challenging to get LBE into the middle schools. There was discussion about connecting LBE high school students with middle school students. Amal Ali shared that she went into seventh grade health classes at Sedgwick last week to discuss peer norms. This may be expanded to eighth graders at Sedgwick as well as to other schools in town.
3. **Strengthen SAPC Capacity to Provide Input and Oversight over Prevention Work** – a UConn administrative intern could be used to work with ICR and the Bridge on SAPC work. Joe Kalache shared that the role of the SAPC is to work in an advisory capacity and that it is unlikely that there will be additional funds to expand the scope of the work of the SAPC. Time ran out and the discussion did not go further.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tyler

March 13, 2015

